



Department of State

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-14 ADS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-07 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SSN-02 SSM-03
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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7954

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BEIJING

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY Dacca 1021

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

WTEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 8464

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USICA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CINCEUR

CINCPAC

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDO/ASD

REVIEWED BY *John Halley* DATE *8/29*
() CLASSIFIED () DECLASSIFY IN PART
() EXEMPT () Non-responsive info.
FOI, FOIA or PA exceptions

TS authority to: _____, OADR
() CLASSIFIED () DOWNGRADE TO () S or () C, OADR

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E.O. 11065: GDS 8/7/86 (GRIFFIN, GEORGE G.B.) OR-M
TAGS: ASEC PP PEPR PINS PINT SHUM AF
SUBJECT: SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

KARACHI ALSO FOR RSS: CINCEUR AND CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLADS

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REF: KABUL 2271 ✓

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1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY: MILITARY ROAD AND AIR TRAFFIC HAS DIMINISHED IN KABUL DURING THE PAST THREE DAYS, PERHAPS INDICATING A LESSENING OF PROBLEMS NEARBY OR A MOVEMENT OF THOSE FORCES TO OTHER TROUBLE SPOTS. THE CITY IS EXPERIENCING OTHER DIFFICULTIES, HOWEVER, AS THE GASOLINE SHORTAGE HAS CONTINUED CAUSING TRAFFIC JAMS AROUND PETROL PUMPS. FOOD SHORTAGES HAVE ALSO INTENSIFIED, AND PRICES OF AVAILABLE BASIC COMMODITIES HAVE RISEN, IN SOME INSTANCES AS MUCH AS 20 PERCENT IN THE PAST WEEK. POLICE AND ARMED PARCHAMIST SPOT SEARCHES OF VEHICLES IN KABUL HAVE CONTINUED AND TAXI DRIVERS HAVE BEEN FORCED TO SIGN PLEDGES TO TURN IN SUSPICIOUS PERSONS. SOVIET AND AFGHAN MILITARY AND SECURITY FORCES HAVE BECOME MORE ALERT AND PATROLS HAVE INCREASED AS RUMORS CONTINUE TO SURFACE THAT TOP KHALQIS ARE ABOUT TO BE DISMISSED OR EXILED TO SOME VERY INTERESTING PLACES. STORIES OF FRESH BATTLES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE ARE HEARD DAILY, BUT THE FLOW OF REFUGEES INTO THE CITY SEEMS TO HAVE SLOWED. THE OFFICIAL MEDIA EXTOLLED THE "SOCIALIST" GLORIES OF THE OLYMPICS AS IT ANNOUNCED THAT THE AFGHAN PARTICIPANTS WERE TO REMAIN IN THE USSR INDEFINITELY. THE LAST AMERICAN IN HERAT HAS MOVED TO KABUL ALONG WITH HIS WESTERN COLLEAGUES BECAUSE OF THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THAT CITY NEAR THE IRANIAN BORDER. THERE ARE NOW 44 AMERICANS IN AFGHANISTAN. END SUMMARY.

3. THE ROAR OF MILITARY ROAD AND AIR TRANSPORT AND FIGHTING EQUIPMENT IN AND OUT OF THE CITY HAS DIMINISHED CONSIDERABLY IN THE PAST THREE DAYS. THE LACK OF NEWS OF FIGHTING IN THE NEARBY COUNTRYSIDE INDICATES THAT MILITARY FORCES HAVE COM-
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PLETED THEIR MISSIONS THERE. HOWEVER, INDICATIONS OF TROUBLES ELSEWHERE MAY MEAN THAT THE TROOPS HAVE BEEN DIRECTED TO OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. (SEE BELOW).

4. THE GREATEST TURBULENCE IN THE CITY DURING THE PAST WEEK HAS BEEN THE TRAFFIC JAMS AND FIST FIGHTS AROUND SERVICE STATIONS AS KABULIS LINE UP FOR RATIONED GASOLINE. (THE EMBASSY HAS MANAGED TO OBTAIN A TWO-MONTH SUPPLY.) TROOPS WERE ASSIGNED TO KEEP ORDER AT SEVERAL STATIONS IN THE CITY AFTER VIOLENT INCIDENTS AMONG DRIVERS FIGHTING FOR FIRST PLACE. (PRIVATE VEHICLES MUST COMPETE WITH TAXIS,

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BUSES AND MILITARY VEHICLES FOR THE SCARCE FUEL.) ONE CONTACT CLAIMS THAT A BLACK MARKET HAS APPEARED IN WHICH GAS IS SOLD AT 15 PERCENT OVER NORMAL PRICES.

5. MEANWHILE, GOOD QUALITY WHEAT, A STAPLE IN KABUL, HAS DISAPPEARED FROM THE MARKET AND THE PRICES OF POORER VARIETIES HAVE CONTINUED TO CLIMB. SEVERAL VARIETIES OF VEGETABLES HAVE ALSO BEEN MISSING FROM GROCERS' SHELVES AND THE PRICE OF MEDIUM QUALITY RICE HAS RISEN 20 PERCENT IN THE PAST WEEK. (AND 35 PERCENT OVER A YEAR AGO). MEAT PRICES HAVE RISEN 5-7 PERCENT IN THE PAST WEEK.

6. SOME SOURCES BLAME THE SHORTAGES ON RESISTANCE ACTIVITY WHICH HAS REPORTEDLY DISRUPTED SUPPLY LINES. A CUSTOMS OFFICER AND SEVERAL TAXI DRIVERS ARE REPEATING A STORY THAT A SOVIET FUEL CONVOY HAS BEEN SURROUNDED BY INSURGENTS WHO THREATEN TO BLOW UP AS MANY AS 100 TRUCKS IF A RANSOM IS NOT PAID. HOWEVER, OTHERS POOH-POOH THAT ALLEGATION AND SAY THAT THERE HAS BEEN WELL

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B QYNIAISCM LOTKZSUIMON THEIR WAY TO KABUL. SEVERAL TAXI DRIVERS HAVE SPECULATED THAT THE REGIME IS HOLDING BACK SUPPLIES UNTIL AFTER THE 10 HOLIDAYS WHEN IT

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PLANS TO RAISE THE PRICES 60 PERCENT. THE TURKISH EMBASSY HAS A REPORT THAT THE DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT MONOPOLIES HAS BEEN ARRESTED AS A SCAPEGOAT.

7. SPOT SEARCHES OF TAXIS AND PRIVATE VEHICLES IN KABUL BY POLICE AND ARMED PARCHAM YOUTHS HAVE CONTINUED. WITNESSES HAVE REPORTED AT LEAST ONE INSTANCE OF A TAXI DRIVER BEING ARRESTED AS A RESULT, BUT WERE UNABLE TO DETERMINE WHY. TWO OF OUR CONTACTS HAVE TOLD US THAT TAXI DRIVERS HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO SIGN PLEDGES TO TURN IN "SUSPICIOUS" PERSONS TO THE NEAREST POLICE STATION. DRIVERS WERE WARNED THAT FAILURE TO DO SO WOULD SUBJECT THEM TO ONE TO THREE MONTHS IN JAIL AND A FINE OF AFS 5,000 (ABOUT \$115).

NOTE BY OCT: (*) AS RECEIVED, CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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